

We claim:

1. A transmission method for operating on information which is transmitted through a medium and comprises main data which are to be transmitted, the method comprising the steps of:

detecting protection data which are specific to said medium and are also transmitted through said medium;

generating additional protection data which comprise at least first additional protection data and second additional protection data,

wherein said first additional protection data are specific to a region or a country in which said main data are to be transmitted, and can not be modified by a recipient of said transmitted main data, and wherein said second additional protection data can be modified by the recipient to selectively define a plurality of protection levels including at least two levels which are respectively specific to adults and to children;

defining a protection level based on said medium protection data and said additional protection data in combination; and

executing transmission of said main data in accordance with said protection level,

wherein the combination of said protection data and said first additional protection data specifies that said main data are transmitted either in their entirety or not at all, and the combination of said protection data and said second additional protection data specifies that said main data are transmitted in their entirety, partially, or not at all,

wherein, for each combination of protection levels based on said protection data and said apparatus protection data, there is a corresponding range of one or more possible values of

final protection level, said corresponding range extending from a least severe value to a most severe value.

2. The transmission method as recited in claim 1, wherein said medium transmits both said protection data and said main data in an identical form.

3. The transmission method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of transmitting both said protection data and said main data through said medium in an identical form.

4. The transmission method as recited in claim 1, wherein said step of executing transmission of said main data comprises:

transmitting said main data either in their entirety or not at all, in accordance with said combination of said medium protection data and said first additional protection data, and

transmitting said main data in their entirety, partially, or not at all, in accordance with said combination of said medium protection data and said second additional protection data.